Rise and Fall in Price Index

1351. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the number of commodities whose price index has risen and those whose price index has declined during the quarter ending September, 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (RAMESHWAR THAKUR): Out of 447, commodities covered in the Wholesale price Index (Base: 1981-82 = 100), the price index of 349 commodities registered an increase, 55 commodities registered a decrease and 43 commodities remained stable during the quarter ending September, 1991.

Trafficking of Chemical Drugs

1352. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Trafficking of chemical drugs on the rise" appearing in the Indian Express dated November 5, 1991;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check the illegal trafficking of chemical drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHIR RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). From the seizure data of methaqualone given below which shows a steep rise in the quantity as well as number of seizures in 1991, it can be observed that the multi-pronged attack of enforcement agencies against the increased smuggling of this chemical drug has proved effective. A number of African nationals carrying this drug were intercepted and arrested and intelligence effort specially directed to Methaqualon is being intensified.

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1985 provides for a minimum punishment of 10 years rigorous imprisonment extendable upto 20 years and minimum fine of Rupees one lakh for trafficking of such drugs. For repeat offences of certain nature, death penalty has been made mandatory. The Central and State Government enforcement agencies have been asked to keep vigilance in the matter.

Quantity of Methaqualone seized (in Kgs.) with number of cases.

Year	*Quantity seized*	*Number of cases*
1987	1500	59
1988	1649	40
1989	887	75
1990	2141	60
1991 (Upto October)	3951	70